

Federal Definition: Who is Homeless?

According to McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, a homeless person is an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth who are:

1. sharing a house due to loss of permanent housing, economic hardship or similar reason;
2. who are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate housing;
3. who are living in emergency or transitional housing;
4. are abandoned in a hospital and/or are awaiting foster care placement (this includes children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations;
5. who live in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing bus or train stations and migratory students meeting the descriptions above.
6. an unaccompanied youth who is considered homeless is someone who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and who meets the above criteria.